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inseparable from the prevailing notion that quantity rather than quality should be put forth as the real attraction; and we look forward, therefore, with the utmost interest to a series of concerts in which delicacy and refinement, both with the choir and orchestra, may be shown to be compatible with energy, precision, and true musical power.

Reviews.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

Novello's Original Octavo Edition of Mozart's Litanias De Venerabile Sacramentum, in B flat.

THIS is the work to which I alluded last month when discussing the other composition by the same composer to the same text. The present is, by four years, the earlier of the two; the autograph, which is in the possession of Mr. A. André, of Offenbach, being superscribed "Lytaniae de Venerabili. Del Sign. Cavaliere Amadeo Wolfg. Mozart nel Mese di Marzo 1772." Another quotation from this manuscript will interestingly exemplify Mozart's self-satisfaction in the work, and his pious habit of mind which prompted him to regard his artistic labour as an act of devotion, and its completion as an occasion for thanks; there is written at the close, "Finis, I.O.D.G."—I presume, Jesu Onore, Deo Gloria; it was common with the musicians and other artists of the time to subscribe their works with some such words of reverence as these, and the custom may be considered as a token of the earnestness wherewith the works were undertaken, rather than any instance of its application being esteemed a mere act of conventionality.

Mozart was at the time recently returned from his second visit to Italy, whither he had been called to produce his *Serenata of Ascanio in Alba*, at Milan, during the festivities in honour of the marriage of the Archduke Ferdinand, in October, 1771. When he reached home at Salzburg, another festival gave further opportunity for the active exercise of the young musician's powers; this was the installation of a new Archbishop, which took place on the 14th of March, 1772, when another *Senerata, Il Sogno di Scipione*, was performed; and the correspondence of dates seems to indicate that the Litany before us may have been written for the same occasion. The use of the Litany of the Holy Sacrament is quite exceptional in the Roman Church, which accounts for the little knowledge of either of Mozart's settings of the text; and the coincident inauguration of the potentate may account for our composer having been required to write the work under present notice. Besides the two compositions to this text, he also wrote two Litanies of the Blessed Virgin, in fulfilment of his Salzburg engagement, the text of which is distinct from this as the occasion must have been for their performance.

We may well admire the fertility which is proved by the rapid production within so brief a period of the several extensive works that have been named, besides many smaller pieces; but we must still more wonder at the maturity these works evince in a lad of sixteen years of age, who herein shows the consummate skill of an experienced master. In this respect, the setting in B flat fully equals the companion work of later date; but in respect of the beauty of its musical ideas, and the poetical illustrations of the words which it presents, this cannot be estimated but as far inferior to the other. One marked exception, however, from the average level of the work, is the noble chorus, "Pignus futuræ gloriæ," which in due place will be subject for special comment. We read with interest, nay with astonishment, the general statement of an artist's precocity, and we accept easily the impression of an early power to produce charming and even beautiful ideas; but it is matter of amazement to find the living proof, in a substantial work of art, to establish that Mozart's early maturity was equal to his facility of invention, and that he had not only the gift of ideas, but, while still in his boyhood, the power of developing them with such

proficiency as amply rewards, and rarely results but from a long course of study. Such mastery is obvious throughout every number in the work under consideration, and though the master was but once most brightly inspired in the whole course of his task, he ever shows himself so practised a workman as to handle his indifferent materials with perfect skill, and to give musicianly interest to his treatment of comparatively unattractive phrases.

Our usual notion of a Litany, who derive it from witnessing the performance of the one in the Service of the Church of England, is an extensive prayer, or series of prayers, the subject matter of which is delivered by a solo voice, and this is interspersed with responsive, or rather complementary adjurations by the chorus. The text of the Litany now under notice is constructed upon precisely the same form, with a sentence apparently for the priest and an antiphon for the people; but its treatment by Mozart is, in both his settings, according to an entirely different distribution of means. In each of these works there are passages for chorus and passages for solo voices; but the musical construction is independent of that of the text, and though the composition aims at expressing and enforcing the purport of the words—less, indeed, in this earlier than in the other work—its plan or design has no reference to the division of the text between priest and people, or any analogous separation of the sentences from their conclusive responses. The words "Miserere Nobis," which complete every clause of the whole, are assigned usually to the same voice or number of voices that have sung the foregoing phrase,—an arrangement that gives a more personal character to each section of the Litany, than the whole would bear if performed according to the usage of the English Church, and takes from the congregational effect which our Litany has when even the responses are sung by the choir only, without the participation of the public. It is, perhaps, a result of this arrangement that each section has its particular and complete expression; and a chief point of interest throughout the work is to notice how variously those ever recurring words of deprecation are rendered, according to the several qualities of the Divinity to which successively they are addressed.

The first number, "Kyrie," comprises the first seven clauses of our English Litany, ending with the address to the Trinity; and its signification will best be felt if we associate in our mind the music with those familiar passages. One might seek far for another so vivacious an embodiment of a prayer for mercy; but it is to be remembered that it was a jubilant occasion which this work was intended to celebrate, and that the festival which induced the composition must also have compelled its generally pervading character. One might fancy, indeed, that the brief *Adagio* with which the chorus enters, and which is veritably an episode in the design of the movement, had been an after thought; so entirely exceptional is it from the gaiety of the orchestral prelude, and the resumption of this in the developed sequel of the piece, one might fancy that, having written the whole *Allegro* without any interruption, and with the thought only present to his mind of the joyfulness that greeted the new prelate, Mozart had some stings of conscience at initiating a religious solemnity in so secular a manner, and interpolated therefore these few slow phrases to give due gravity at least to the outset of his work. Two short solos, respectively for alto and soprano, relieve the effect of the choral voices, but apparently have no higher, or indeed other object in the structure of the movement.

No. 2 is an air for soprano, to the words beginning "Panis vivus," which is rather graceful than beautiful, but vocal, at least, and flowing.

Nos. 3 and 4 are linked together by a couple of bars of modulation; and, as each consists of two movements that are similarly connected, it is difficult to guess why they should be classed as separate pieces, since the whole series is not divided into four distinct numbers. This chain of pieces opens with an *Adagio* at the words, "Verbum caro

factum," which is successfully designed to make most impressive the mystery of the incarnate Word, under which aspect the Deity is here adjoined; a sequence of modulation, which is surprisingly beautiful, anticipates some of the most felicitous moments of the latest period of the master, and shows him to have forefelt as much the import of the text as the technical means of giving utterance to the awe with which he regarded this. The setting of the same passage is an incident of conspicuous interest in Mozart's other version of the Litany; and is, indeed, another and a still higher rendering of the same idea of the text that is here presented. Hence, we may gather that—however sometimes necessitated by the external circumstances of the occasion, by the capabilities of his executants, or by the capacities of his listeners, to veil his true feelings under a trivial manner—our artist had so profound a religious sense as fully to warrant the dedication of his talents to the Church's service. Mozart's religion was a source of cheerfulness to him; and this he made it to all whom he approached. Thus, even in his last and greatest work, every portion of the text that will consistently admit of it, is brightened by the love-colour of his hopeful mind; and so, here, a succession of sentences from that beginning "Hostia sancta," is set to an animated *Allegro*, in which solos for soprano, alto, and bass, are effectively alternated with choral phrases. The music for the single word, "Tremendum," aims, and not in vain, at grandeur. The theorist, as much as the lover of beauty, may rest with interest upon a progression which our composer sometimes afterwards employed, but which is almost peculiar to him; I mean a resolution of the first inversion of a chord of the minor 9th and 7th of D upon the first inversion of the chord of D minor, and the analogous resolution of the inverted chord of the major 9th of C upon an inversion of the chord of C minor.



The remarkable effect of this resolution supersedes all argument in its justification; and they must be content to admire who are unable to account for it. A change of movement, from *Adagio* to *Allegro*, distinguishes the continuation of the sentence, "ac vivificum Sacramentum," &c., and almost ostentatiously, if not extravagantly, divides the fear-making from the life-giving quality, which are the two attributes of the Holy Sacrament declared in this unbroken sentence. The extreme conciseness of these two latter portions of the series makes the more remarkable their separate numbering from the former two, since they would appear but as a broken member if heard apart from the preceding.

"Panis Omnipotentia," are the first words of an air for tenor, which constitutes No. 5. This is broad and simple, and if not irresistibly attractive, is fully satisfactory. What is most to be observed in it is its curious evidence of the different development of the tenor voice which prevailed a century since, from that which is at present practised. Here we have a passage that rises to A flat, and many and many a G above the staff, but several cadences, and even the final close, upon the low E flat. On the other hand, the tendency of our own singers is to concentrate so much the power of the voice in the upper part of its register, that there is scarcely a tenor who could terminate this song with good effect, and not one who would not close it with better effect if he ended an octave higher than the written note. Is it, then, that composers now compel singers to train their voices in order to give concluding brilliancy to an air; or that composers, who are the slaves of everybody else, are subordinate to singers too, and are themselves condemned to twist their thoughts into the trim that best accommodates the fashion of the

vocalists? Everything follows the fashion; and, whereas in personalities this fluctuates, as we have recently experienced, between light and dark hair and complexion, in tenor voices it has shifted from the equal cultivation of the entire compass to the aggrandisement of a few notes at the expense of the rest.

The next two numbers are again musically connected, though there is no more special relationship between the two sentences to which they are set than any other two in the Litany. They are entirely for chorus. No. 6, "Vaticum in Domino morientium," derives solemnity from its chromatic modulations, as much as from its slow *tempo*. It forms a worthy introduction to the succeeding piece, into which its half-close naturally leads, and the effect of which it much enhances. No. 7 is the truly grand chorus, "Pignus futuræ gloriæ," which is, in every respect, the most remarkable piece in the work; and is, indeed, so admirable as to command frequent separate attention, and to have been often performed together with the foregoing movement, which, as has been shown, is manifestly planned to prepare the way for it, apart from the rest of the Litany. Otto Jahn, whose description of the autograph of this work I have followed, states that the original MS. of the present movement shows many corrections, erasures of bars, and other alterations, that prove unusual pains have been spent upon it. We may hence suppose that the boy Mozart had not yet attained to the avowed and certified habit of the man of riper years, the habit of completing always a composition in his mind before committing a note of it to paper. It is curious to observe the mental process whereby a work of art may have been wrought to its perfection, but totally immaterial to its merit and to its effect. It signifies nothing, then, that the evidence remains of how carefully this masterpiece was elaborated; that it is a masterpiece is the happy result, and this truth must be felt by everyone who knows the composition. It is a fugue, in the broad diatonic style, which would have done honour to any, the best, of the contrapuntists of an earlier generation, and might be accredited to them but for a passage of modulation when the movement is far advanced, that is in strong contrast to, though in excellent keeping with, the rest, and that signally associates the piece with its author. The rare merit of these two movements—which should always be regarded as constituting one indivisible whole—very well justifies, and quite accounts for, their occasional extraction from the Litany at miscellaneous performances; but it is sufficient, also, to excite an interest in the entire work, a perusal of which will well repay, in the pleasure the music will afford, the time it may cost, and will interestingly illustrate the biography of Mozart's youth.

The concluding number, "Agnus Dei," comprises two settings of the same sentence; first, as an air for soprano, and second, as a short chorus, the latter being a sequel to, not an alternative for, the other, and being musically linked to it, though consisting of distinctly different ideas. The piece may be dismissed with the remark that it is the weakest portion of the work; but that it has its good effect in the entirety of the composition, by closing the whole with such sweet tranquillity as to leave the impression that the whole has been a prayer for mercy, throughout which the spirit of deprecation has been predominant, though varied in its expression according to the grander, or graver, or gentler, or more jubilant, or more awful character of the sentences, which all terminate with the words, "Miserere nobis."

The present economical and useful edition is a monument of a custom which, I am told, is happily going out of use—the custom of adapting to sacred music English words of utterly different sense, and utterly different sentiment, from those to which it was originally written and only designed to express. The presence of this English adaptation, so thoroughly foreign to the purpose, is no hindrance, however, to the right understanding of the composer's meaning, and no detraction, therefore, from the value of the publication; since the original words are faithfully printed,

so that they always may, as they invariably should, be sung to the notes. All singers are enough versed in Latin to know how to pronounce it, whether with the English or Continental sound of the vowels; many singers and listeners are enough versed in Latin to understand the general purport, if not the minute meaning, of the text of the Litany; and, for the advantage of those performers and audiences who possess not this much of Latinity, a hand-book may be printed with a literal translation side by side with the original, which may obviate every difficulty, if any exist, in the full comprehension of the purport and the merit of the work.

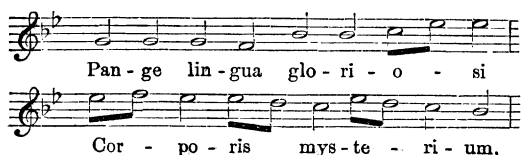
The great pleasure I have derived from the perusal of these two compositions is imperfectly stated in my remarks of last month and the present, which I hope, at least, may be sufficient to prompt others, and particularly concert-givers who may be the medium of its wider diffusion, to look for the gratification I have enjoyed from Mozart's youthful and his more youthful settings of the Litany of the Holy Sacrament.

In the examination last month of Mozart's setting in E flat of this Litany, I ventured the speculation that the melody assigned to the soprano chorus, and accompanied in the manner which the many examples by Bach and other musicians of North Germany have led us particularly to associate with the Lutheran Church, was perhaps one of the tunes of early Roman use; and I have been favoured by Mr. Burns with the most interesting confirmation of this conjecture. The following melody, he informs me, is taken from an ancient Antiphonium, and is supposed to be the original form of the same to which expressly St. Thomas Aquinas wrote his hymn "Pange lingua."



Tan-tum er-go sa-cra-men-tum,
Ve-ne-re-mur cer-nu-i:
Et an-ti-quum do-cu-men-tum,
No-vo ce-dat ri-tu-i,
Pres-tet fi-des sup-ple-men-tum,
Sen-su-um de-fec-tu-i.

Hence, it should seem that already in the thirteenth century the tune was chosen for its long standing and high esteem by the devout and erudite Neapolitan. Its continued Church use in conjunction with the hymn of St. Thomas Aquinas is proved by its appearance in the *Ratisbon Choral Buch*, where, however, it is changed from the Third or Phrygian Mode (which is distinguished by the peculiarly plaintive effect of a semitone *above* the final note) into the First or Dorian, and further modernised by the licentious sharpening of the note below the last. It stands thus:—



Pan-ge lin-gua glo-ri-o-si
Cor-po-ris mys-te-ri-um,



Sang-ui-nis que pre-ti-o-si,
quem in mun-di pre-ti-um,
Fru-c-tus ven-tris ge-ne-ro-si
Rex ef-fu-dit gen-ti-um.

The further modification of this last as presented by Mozart may be due to traditional corruption, or may be a designed change made by the composer. I prefer to suppose the former. Even in this shape, though slightly disguised, the identity of the tune is not disturbed:



Vi-a-ti-cum,
vi-a-ti-cum
in Do-mi-no,
Mo-ri-en-ti-um,
mi-se-re-re no-bis,
mi-se-re-re no-bis.

The entire hymn, "Pange lingua," is sung in the Roman Church but once a year, namely, at the Vespers of the feast of Corpus Christi; but the fifth and sixth stanzas, beginning respectively, "Tantum ergo Sacramentum," and "Genitore genitoque," are sung on all Sunday evenings, and at other times when the rite of Benediction is celebrated. The subject with which this ancient tune is most familiarly associated is, then, quite analogous to that of the Litany, and especially to the passage in it which addresses the power that gives life to those who die in the Lord, and the appropriation of this passage to the tune commonly sung to the verses beginning "Tantum ergo," is eminently pertinent. Besides the particular technical treatment of the theme, upon which I last month made some remarks, its application in this place invites especially our admiration, since showing that Mozart felt the force of thus illustrating by musical allusion the purport of his text, and so anticipated a device which has often happily, but never more successfully, been employed by his successors.

G. A. M.

Six Anglican Chants, to be sung in Unison, with a varied Accompaniment for the Organ. Composed by Alexander S. Cooper.

THE notion of this little collection is exceedingly good, and it has always surprised us that the idea should have been so little used; for there must be a large number of organists who, however well they may play, are unable to improvise a varied selection of harmonies: and to them such a publication cannot fail to be valuable. Some of the progressions display a slight want of care, but otherwise we have nothing to say that is not commendatory.